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(12) **United States Patent**  
**Wolzien**

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(54) **MEDIA ONLINE SERVICE ACCESS SYSTEM AND METHOD**

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(\* ) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

(21) Appl. No.: **09/054,740**

A system is disclosed for providing direct automated access to an online information services provider through an address embedded in a video or audio program, commercial message, or news story. The system operates with video or audio programs which are received through broadcast, cable or pre-recorded media, and which are encoded in either analog or digital formats. The address of an online information provider is encoded in a vertical blanking interval or other non-displayed portion of an electronic signal which represents the video or audio program so as not to interfere with the program as displayed or transduced on a television or audio sound system. The online information provider address is detected and decoded from the electronic signal and used in establishing a direct digital communication link to the online information provider. Upon detecting an online provider address, the system indicates to the user that more information is available. The user may then elect to establish a connection with the online information provider by giving a simple command, e.g., pushing a special button on a remote control. The system then automatically establishes a direct digital communication link to the online information provider through the address and provides for interactive information exchange and processing to permit signals received from the online information provider to be displayed on a conventional television, transduced on a sound system, or also on a high resolution reproducing system such as a computer monitor, or other reproduction device.

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**Related U.S. Application Data**

(63) Continuation of application No. 08/597,432, filed on Feb. 8, 1996, now Pat. No. 5,761,606.

- (51) **Int. Cl.**<sup>7</sup> ..... **H04N 7/173**
- (52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **725/110; 725/112; 725/133**
- (58) **Field of Search** ..... 348/6, 10, 12, 348/13, 460, 461, 465, 468, 469, 473, 476-479, 563, 564, 565; 455/3.1, 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3; 709/217-219; 725/105, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 131, 133; H04N 7/00, 7/10, 7/14

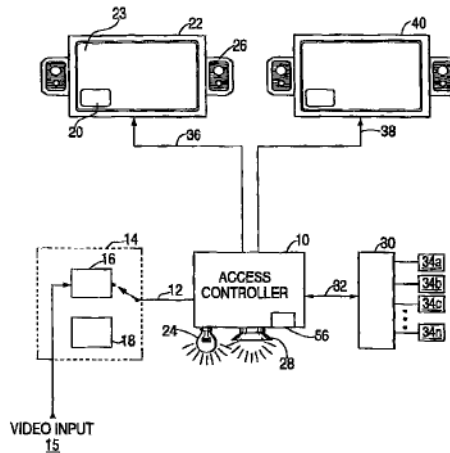
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**12 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets**



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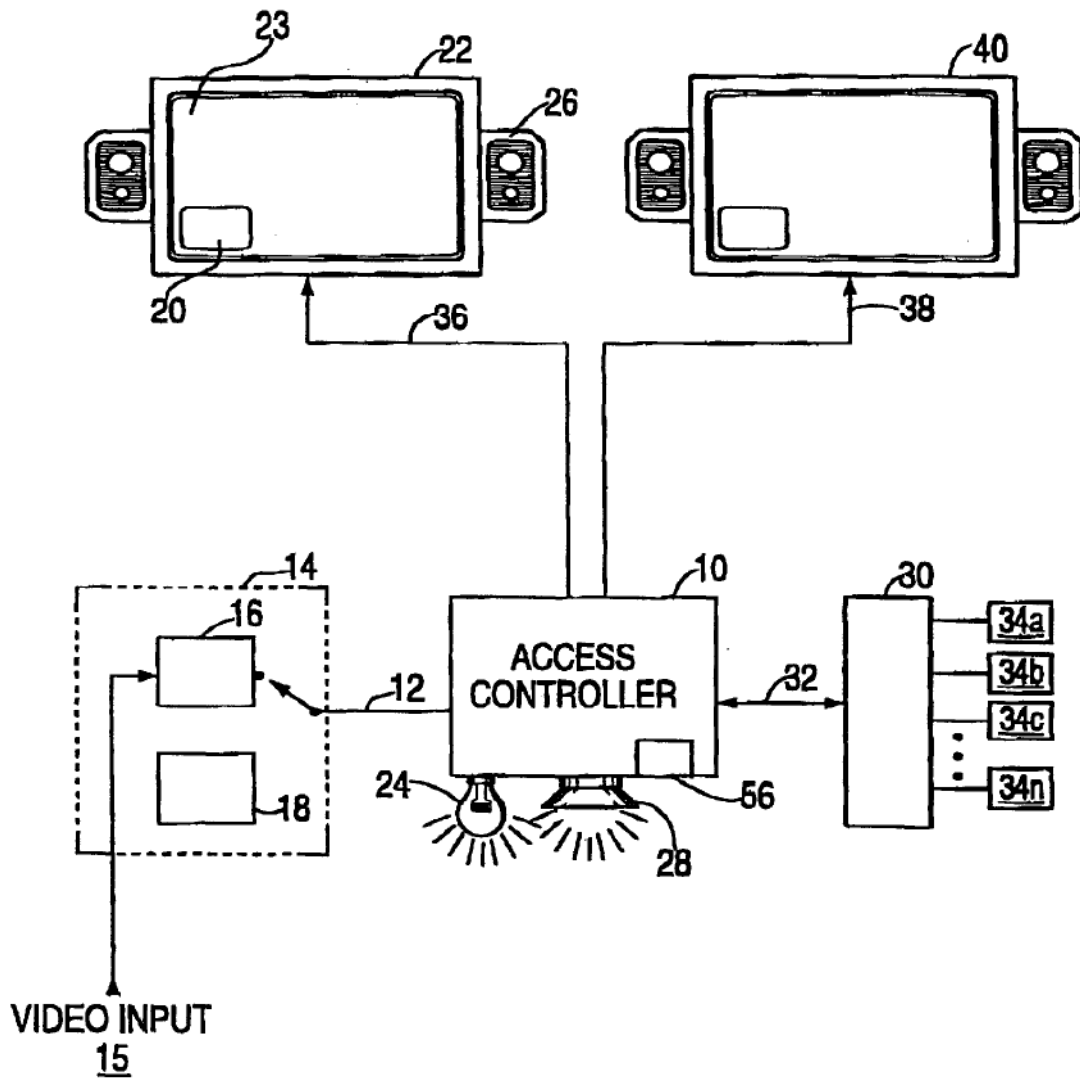


FIG. 1

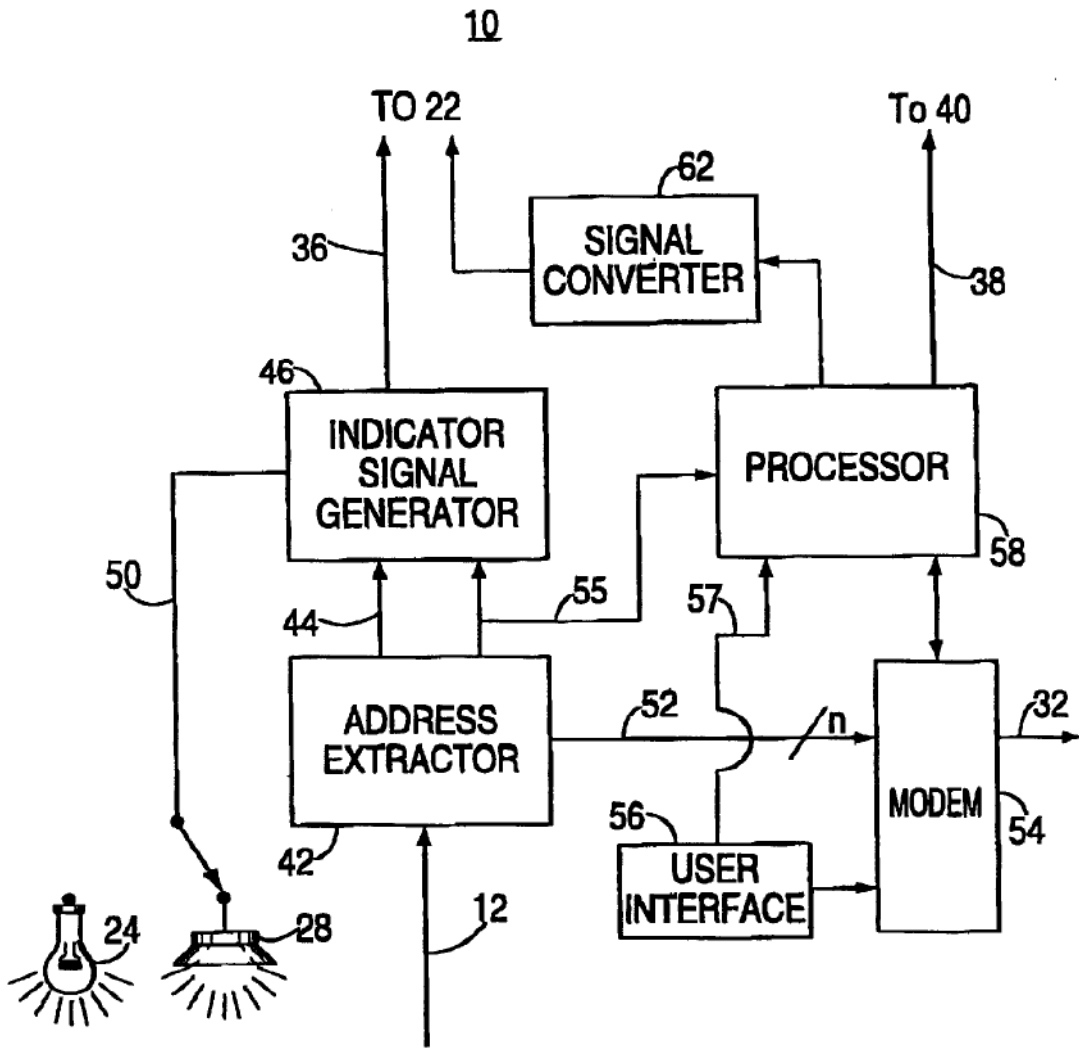


FIG. 2

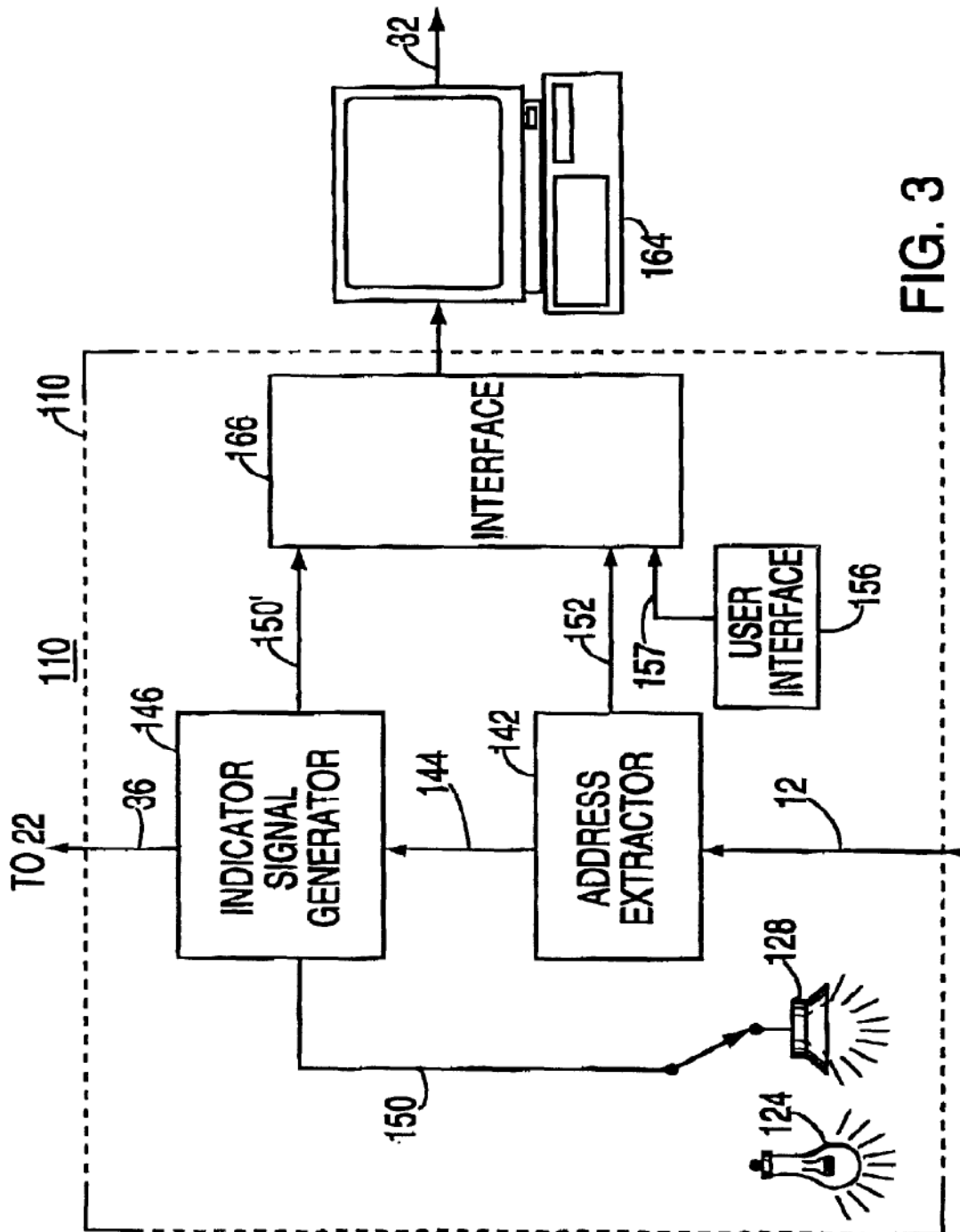


FIG. 3

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